

Today's News - Wednesday, August 22, 2012

- Tributes abound for Nakano, a landscape architect and urban designer who was "always looking toward the bigger good - not just the project but the context in which the project was being inserted."
- A historian's thoughtful take on why the international community should "work to protect Syria's historical sites" - its "cultural patrimony can play a crucial role" in repairing the divisions when the revolution ends.
- Chen reports that multiple (but anonymous) sources have tagged Nouvel as the winner in a starchitect-studded competition to design a "mega-sized" new building for the National Art Museum of China (great slide show of shortlist - minus Nouvel).
- Mosca mulls: "what is REALLY going to happen to the buildings, the open spaces, and the people that had to relocate" now the Olympics are over.
- Florida takes issue with another journalist's call to "scrap" the office of the Mayor of London "because it has been working too well...rivals should be looking for ways to emulate it so that they can better compete with it, not tear it down."
- Lackmeyer reports on an "urban revival meeting" led by "urban planning evangelist" Norquist in Oklahoma City, with halleluiahs for his "harsh rebuke to highway engineers."
- Possible design competition for public spaces in Baltimore's much-anticipated Harbor Point project has the master plan architect at odds with the developer.
- Bentley has high hopes for Indianapolis's CityWay that would create a new neighborhood from 14 acres of vacant land.
- Eicker is most eloquent about Noero Wolff's Red Location Cultural Precinct in Port Elizabeth, South Africa that "honors the legacy of the fight against apartheid, while bringing it alive for a new generation."
- King gives two thumbs-ups to a historic preservation project in Palo Alto: "While the story of the new EcoCenter is unique, the basics embody 21st century preservation in the Bay Area and the nation."
- At the other end of the preservation spectrum, San Francisco neighbors are none too thrilled with Twitter co-founder's tear-down plans "on one of the city's most idyllic streets."
- Sam Hall Kaplan is heartened by L.A.'s new Grand Park: it "marks a shift in the city's psyche" (and "the tail of the Grand Avenue project that is wagging the dog").
- Szenasy's Q&A with Design Trust for Public Space's Chin re: the urban farming movement: "Typically farms and gardens are not competing with developers for land."
- Chicago's Northerly Island gets the engineering go-ahead to reshape its southern end, but things are "a long way off from fulfilling some of the glitzier goals."
- Scheeren "wants to take on the Gehrys and Fosters by opening an office in London" (some amusing passages: he can't get onto the CCTV grounds).
- Caruso's Q&A with Holl: he's "not a 'signature' architect (and why that's good)."
- A conversation in Viet Nam with São Paulo architect Kogan re: his views on urban Viet Nam: "I think Ha Noi has potential for contemporary architecture."

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Obituary: Kenichi Nakano, 67, remembered for talent, spirit, friendship: "He just had a knack for understanding people, listening and producing good work"...founder of the Seattle landscape architecture and urban design firm Nakano Associates... -- Karen Kiest|Landscape Architects; Les Tonkin/Tonkin/Hoyne Architecture; ZGF Architects; Kris Snider/Hewitt- Daily Journal of Commerce (Oregon)

Saving Syria: As it descends into bedlam, the international community must work to protect the country's historical sites...one might rightly ask whether the protection of historical sites should be much of a priority...cultural patrimony can play a crucial role: as a reminder to the country of its diversity and achievements across the ages, as well as a symbol of pride and unity going forward. By Christian C. Sahner- Wall Street Journal

Jean Nouvel Said to Win Big Job in China: According to multiple sources, he has been selected to design a mega-sized new building for the National Art Museum of China (NAMOC) in Beijing...At 1.3 million square feet, the new structure will be mammoth. By Aric Chen -- Frank Gehry; Zaha Hadid; OMA; UNStudio; Yung Ho Chang; Zhu Pei; Ma Yansong/MAD; Herzog & de Meuron; Moshe Safdie [slide show]- Architectural Record

The Olympics are over ... now what? London has introduced concepts of temporality in its buildings, unlike previous Olympic host cities...should be applauded...the question still remains...what is REALLY going to happen to the buildings, the open spaces, and the people that had to relocate all in the name of tradition? By Laura Mosca -- Populous; Zaha Hadid- Metropolis Magazine

Has the London Mayor's Office Been Too Successful? A thought-provoking recent piece by Kevin Meagher...asks if it is "time to scrap" the office of the Mayor of London...because it has been working too well...What's needed is a strategy to spur greater development in other U.K. cities...rivals should be looking for ways to emulate it so that they can better compete with it, not tear it down. By Richard Florida -- Ken Livingstone; Boris Johnson- The Atlantic Cities

An Oklahoma City urban revival meeting prompts cheers: Urban planning expert John Norquist brings his message...a harsh rebuke to highway engineers...over plans to build a highly anticipated elevated downtown boulevard...[he] is seen as an urban planning evangelist. By Steve Lackmeyer - Congress for the New Urbanism (CNU)- The Oklahoman

Harbor Point park design may spur architect contest: The development and architect teams...have reached a disagreement over the best way to design 9.3 acres of public space...for the 27-acre site
-- Ayers Saint Gross - Baltimore Business Journal

Indy Going Urban: New development to activate unused downtown parcel...In Indianapolis...a project that would essentially create a new neighborhood from 14 acres of vacant land...CityWay is designed to connect the city's core to its somewhat overlooked Southeast Quadrant. By Christopher Bentley -- Gensler; OZ Architects [images]- The Architect's Newspaper

Red Location Cultural Precinct: Where Defiance Began: A cultural complex [in Port Elizabeth, South Africa] by Noero Wolff Architects honors the legacy of the fight against apartheid, while bringing it alive for a new generation of South Africans. By Karen Eicker/Architects' Collective [slide shows]- Architectural Record

Historic preservation in Palo Alto: While the story of the new EcoCenter is unique, the basics embody 21st century preservation in the Bay Area and the nation....In the case of...former Sea Scouts building, the arc of its life conveys how profoundly that city has changed, and the region's priorities as well. By John King -- Birge and David Clark (1941); Cody Anderson Wasney Architects - San Francisco Chronicle

Neighbors to Twitter co-founder: Cease and desist: Change doesn't come easily in San Francisco, so it's no surprise that history buffs are fighting Evan Williams' plans to destroy an old house...pitting the rights of new tech money against an old community - albeit one already littered with new tech money - trying to stop change on one of the city's most idyllic streets. -- Louis Christian Mullgardt (1911); Lundberg Design; Carey & Co Inc. Architecture [slide show]- CNET

L.A.'s Latest Park Marks a Shift in the City's Psyche: Given the region's segregated and fractured cityscape, public parks in Los Angeles frankly have had few advocates...Grand Park is the tail of the Grand Avenue project that is wagging the dog. By Sam Hall Kaplan -- Rios Clementi Hale Studios; Frank Gehry; Diller Scofidio + Renfro- PLANetizen

Q&A: Susan Chin on Urban Farms: Today there are 10 times more urban farms in Gotham than in San Francisco and Seattle...she answers a few questions about the culture, the realities, and potential for the urban farming movement..."Typically farms and gardens are not competing with developers for land." By Susan S. Szenasy -- Design Trust for Public Space; Five Borough Farm: Seeding the Future of Urban Agriculture in New York [images, links]- Metropolis Magazine

Northerly Island to go back in time: Army Corps of Engineers OKs plan to transform southern end into 'a picture of what the city was like before the city was built'...reshaping the southern end of the 91-acre man-made peninsula into an ecologically diverse habitat...The Park District is a long way off from fulfilling some of the glitzier goals... -- Jeanne Gang/Studio Gang- Chicago Tribune

A New Starchitect Takes Aim at London: Ole Scheeren has become a success in Asia...Now the rising star wants to take on the Gehrys and Fosters by opening an office in London...wants to prove that he can do more than high-profile government and investor-funded buildings in Asia. -- Rem Koolhaas/Office for Metropolitan Architecture (OMA); Büro Ole Scheeren [images]- Der Spiegel (Germany)

Inside the Design Mind II: Steven Holl: not a 'signature' architect (and why that's good)...talks about his sources of inspiration, a mid-career enlightenment, and his recent recognition as one of the most celebrated "American" architects. By Andrew Caruso [images, links]- Metropolis Magazine

The director laureate of modern design: Marcio Kogan talks to Bao An about his career, and his views on urban Viet Nam..."I think Ha Noi has potential for contemporary architecture." -- Studio MK27- Viet Nam News

Q&A with Nicole Migeon - Architect of "Warm Minimalism": Designing places of respite for creative clientele- ArchNewsNow

-- ARX Portugal Arquitectos & Stefano Riva: House in Juso, Portugal
-- [i]da Arquitectos: DJ House, Carcavelos, Portugal

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